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POPULATION ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA: TASMANIAN PERSPECTIVES

Steve Matheson (ABS Regional Director and Govt Statistician of Tasmania) and Con Pagonis (State Director, DIMA) together with the Network Of Commonwealth Regional Directors in Tasmania (Netcom) will present two public sessions on population issues relevant to Tasmania with Dr Graeme Hugo, Professor of Geography and Director of the National Key Centre for Social Applications of GIS.

There is to be a morning seminar for people with an interest in developing, implementing or evaluating demographic and population policy. The session will also be of value to anyone keen to improve their conceptual understanding, or their knowledge of contemporary issues particularly relevant to Tasmania, and in context with the rest of Australia and trends elsewhere in the world.

The second session is a lunch and a keynote address summarising the morning session but concentrating on trends in Australia, and where Tasmania is placed. This session is particularly relevant for senior public servants and administrators, ministerial staffers local CEOs of private enterprise, and academics.

The seminar and lunch will be held on 2 August 2000 at the Salamanca Inn in Gladstone St. Information on registrations will be available from: Trevor Whitton from 3 July on: Ph: 6223 7968 or email: twhitton@primus.com.au

HUGO, Professor Graeme, Director

Professor Hugo is the Director of the Key Centre. He is an acknowledged international expert in the area of geodemographics as well as on Australian and Asian population issues. He has served on a number of Australian government population related committees as well as worked as a consultant to a wide range of international organisations (World Bank, ILO, UNFPA, UN Population Division UNESCAP) and the Indonesian government. He is on scientific committees of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population and the International Geographical Union and is on the Social Science Panel of the Australian Research Council.

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ABS SUPPORTING TASMANIA TOGETHER PROJECT

Following an invitation to participate in the Tasmania Together project, the ABS has appointed a full time officer to manage its involvement in the process.

Tasmania Together aims to develop a vision for Tasmania in 20 years' time and a plan for getting there. The plan will focus on social, economic and environmental goals and will include a set of performance indicators which will be used to regularly measure and evaluate progress towards reaching objectives defined in the plan.

The plan is being developed by the Community Leaders Group (CLG), which is a group of 22 Tasmanians drawn from various sectors of the Tasmanian community. All Tasmanians have had the opportunity to participate in the consultation process with the CLG actively encouraging feedback.

The ABS will be actively involved in a consultative role, primarily to help the development of the performance indicators. The ABS will be a provider of both technical (eg survey and statistical coordination) and subject matter expertise for those involved in developing performance indicators.

The ABS is also a member of the Agency Working Group, a forum which enables Government agencies to participate in Tasmania Together. Although the ABS' role is still to be formally finalised it is envisaged that the ABS may assist in processes such as:

- the review, development and refinement of proposed indicators;
- the identification of potential ABS and non-ABS data sources that may be used, including the review of non-ABS data sources;
- providing advice on the cost and feasibility of new data proposals that may arise from the benchmarking process;
- supply of data for the indicators.

For further information; contact: Lisa Short: Ph 6222 5814 or email lisa.m.short@abs.gov.au

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Your input invited
DIRECTORY OF UTILITIES STATISTICS

A Directory of Utilities Statistics, which will draw together references to all sources of published and unpublished statistics related to electricity, gas, water and sewerage, is being developed.

The directory should increase awareness of ABS and related data from other Government and non-government organisations. A release date of around April 2001 is envisaged. The collection will be undertaken on a voluntary basis. During April and May of this year, a questionnaire will be sent to organisations that have collected or do collect data related to electricity, gas, water and sewerage. Please contact the ABS if you would like your organisation to be considered as an entry in the Directory.

For further information contact Margaret Thomson on 07 3222 6367 or margaret.thomson@abs.gov.au

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TSAC

The Tasmanian Statistical Advisory Committee consists of representatives from State Government agencies and the ABS and meets regularly to co-ordinate the statistical needs of the State.

TSAC members

- Julie Campbell (Chair), Mathew Healey (Chair), Paul Sayer, Janine Pearson, Greg Brown, Roger Simpson, Lyn Andersch, Geoff Owen: **Premier & Cabinet**
- Paul Daniels, Andrew Smith, Daniel Albert: **Education**
- Sue Steinbauer: **Police**
- Graeme Vaughan, Geoff Green, John Dawson: **Infrastructure, Energy and Resources**
- Tony Port: **Primary Industries, Water and Environment**
- Steve Matheson, Rod Caswell, Cassy Short: **ABS**
- Janet Locke, Sue Wragge, Steven Kyne, Amanda Walsh, Anita Griffin: **State Development**
- Jonathon Rees: **Justice**
- Iain Meaney: **Treasury**
- Geoff Fisher, Louise Newbery: **Audit Office**
- Anna Williams, Jeanette Lewis: **Health & Human Services**

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COMPILING THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is one of the best known and widely used statistical collections undertaken by the ABS. It is an important economic indicator providing a general measure of changes in prices of consumer goods and services purchased by Australian households. It was first compiled in 1960.

The CPI is constructed by regularly pricing a 'basket' of goods and services representative of the expenditure patterns of wage and salary earner households in each of the eight capital cities. As prices vary, the total cost of this basket will also vary. The CPI simply measures the changes in the total price of this basket as the prices of the items change.

The composition of the basket is based on the actual spending habits of the CPI population

group as a whole. This information is obtained from the Household Expenditure Survey which is conducted periodically by the ABS.

In Hobart the ABS employs three field officers to record prices for several thousand commodities on monthly, quarterly and an annual basis from retail outlets such as new car dealerships, clothing outlets, supermarkets, take away food stores, medical and dental providers as well as entertainment and alcohol outlets. Services providers such as insurers and travel agents are also included. Collections officers spend as much as 65% of their time in the field on a daily basis, this is to ensure an accurate representation of price movement. The data are generally recorded on hand held computers and uploaded via a PC to a central point for compilation into the quarterly publication 6401.0 Consumer Price Index.

Confidentiality is strictly observed both at the specification and provider level, to ensure that the price movements reflect the buying experience of the bulk of the metropolitan population so the brands and the varieties of the items which are priced are generally those which sell in the greatest volume.

For practical reasons, the CPI basket cannot include every kind of item purchased by households, but it does include all items that represent a significant proportion of total household expenditure and for which prices can be accurately measured.

The CPI is produced on a quarterly basis and is available approximately 4 weeks after the reference period.

For further information see: **A Guide to the Consumer Price Index, Cat. 6440.0**

CPI and the GST

The ABS will not be compiling a 'GST-free' CPI.

The CPI measures changes in prices actually paid by Australian households. Prices used in the CPI have historically included commodity taxes such as excise duty, wholesale sales tax and stamp duty.

Following the introduction of the GST, which replaces most of these existing indirect taxes, the CPI will continue to reflect changes in final transaction prices actually paid by households. This means that the CPI will be inclusive of the GST.

Not only will the approach be consistent with the current treatment to include indirect taxes in the CPI but it will also be consistent with the compilation of CPIs in other countries where a GST, or similar tax applies.

For further information contact Keith Woolford on (02) 6252 6673 or email [**keith.woolford@abs.gov.au**](mailto:keith.woolford@abs.gov.au)

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REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EXPENDITURE PUBLICATION

The ABS is undertaking a comprehensive user review for its publication Environmental Protection Expenditure, Australia (4603.0), and users and potential users of the data are invited to submit comments.

The publication presents estimates of expenditure on environment protection by all levels of government, the corporate sector and households. Information is collected about the agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and services industries, as well as utilities providing electricity, gas and water treatment services.

The expenditures of governments, businesses and households are broken down into a number of categories of environmental protection. These include waste management (including hazardous and non-hazardous), waste water & water protection, air & climate, biodiversity & landscape, soil & groundwater, and other environmental protection.

The ABS has been collecting information on environmental expenditure since 1990-91. In the review, we are looking for user feedback in relation to the usefulness, scope and quality of the data, as well as comprehension and presentation. As well as seeking user's views through either mailed questionnaires or interviews, we will be conducting face to face interviews with interested users from key organisations in government and industry across Australia.

Those with an interest in this consultation process should contact:

Barb Vernon: b.vernon@abs.gov.au or 02 6252 5613

Stuart Peevor: stuart.peevor@abs.gov.au or 02 6252 7042

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SURVEY ON HOUSEHOLD WATER USAGE

The ABS will be conducting an environmental supplementary survey in 2001 on household's water usage which will be published later in the year in **Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices 2001 (Catalogue Number 4602.0)**.

Questions will cover topics such as sources of water for garden, shower, washing and drinking; cost of water; water quality; use of water filters; rainwater tanks installation; swimming pool installation; water efficiency rating in appliances; water conservation methods in the garden; and garden watering methods. In addition, questions on environmental behaviour and visits to national parks will be asked.

The ABS is currently seeking feedback from stakeholders and interested parties in relation to the usefulness, scope and quality of the proposed data items. Those interested in finding out more about the data items or needing further information should contact: Boon Lim on 02 6252 6186 or boon.lim@abs.gov.au

See also: **Water Account for Australia, Cat. No 4610.0**

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OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW OF THE ABS HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PROGRAM

The ABS has now completed the review of its program of household surveys initiated 18 months ago. In the review process the ABS has had extensive consultation with clients, circulated a number of working papers and draft proposals, and received many responses and submissions from clients.

These consultations have enabled the ABS to reassess existing and continuing demands against emerging new demands and known gaps in the statistical program. In addition, proposals have been discussed with the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC).

General outcomes

- An expanded program costing an additional \$5m to \$6m annually over the next 10 years
- A partnership with the Department of Health and Aged Care for funding support for an expanded program of health surveys.
- Program reflects the highest priority demands of users, their comments and advice

- A degree of program flexibility to respond to emerging demands
- To work closely with departments and user groups through both review implementation and determination of topics for program future years.
- Development of strategies for the production of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people statistics from both surveys and administrative collections.
- Proposal of a set of social indicators/statistics to describe and monitor well-being of population for areas of social concern to be developed and maintained with assistance from key users.

The new program contains the following five elements:

- Monthly labour force and supplementary surveys
- Special Social Survey (SSS)
To provide detailed information about a specific subject area or group within the population.
- General Social Survey (GSS)
To obtain broad information across all areas of social concern. To be conducted every 3 years, with content that is largely fixed.
- Indigenous general social survey (IGSS)
- Multi-purpose household survey (MPHS)
To collect, by personal interview, small amounts of data in a number of subject fields rather than large amounts of data about a single topic. To be run 2 years in 3 - those years when the GSS is not in the field.

Note: The Population Survey Monitor will be discontinued at the end of 2000.

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REVIEWS OF OTHER COLLECTIONS

Australian Classification Framework for Culture/Leisure Statistics

A three-year project to revise the current Culture Statistics Framework is nearing completion, with its publication expected mid-2000. The new Framework contains three separate classifications, covering Industry, Occupations and Products. It will provide a structure for collecting data for the culture and leisure sectors, which includes heritage, the arts, sport and recreation.

For further information, contact Sue Gredley on 08 8237 7403 or sue.gredley@abs.gov.au

Functional Classification of Buildings

The review of the Functional Classification of Building (FCB) has been completed. Data for ABS publications will be captured using the new classification from July 2000. The classification used in ABS publications will remain unchanged until such time as the impacts of the new classification have been fully assessed.

For further information contact Loucas Harous on (08) 8237 7585 or email loucas.harous@abs.gov.au

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THE 2000-2001 LABOUR FORCE SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY PROGRAM

2000

2001

February		Labour Force Experience/ ATSI Identifier
March		Env: Water Use & Conservation
April		Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Activities
May		Transition from Education to Work
June		Disability
July	Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons/ Successful & Unsuccessful Job Search Experience/ Multiple Jobholders	Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons/ Retrenchment & Redundancy/ Multiple Jobholders
August	Weekly Earnings of Employees/ Leave Entitlements etc. Persons Not in the Labour Force/	(Census) Leave Entitlements etc. Persons Not in the Labour Force/
September	Underemployed Workers Work injuries	Underemployed Workers/ Small Businesses
October	State topic	State topic
November	Working Arrangements	Forms of Employment

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CENSUS 2001: UPDATE ON CENSUS COLLECTION DISTRICTS AND GAZETTED SUBURBS

In a previous issue of Statistical News it was reported that changes to Census Collection Districts (CCDs) boundaries were being proposed to align them with the new gazetted suburb boundaries in metropolitan areas.

A great advantage of the resulting close concordance between census areas and gazetted suburbs is that users will be able to relate census data directly with other data, using the link of suburb.

Design work in Tasmania has progressed to the point where it is possible to illustrate the 2001 CCD-suburb relationship graphically. Maps show that suburb boundaries extensively employ cadastral (i.e., property,) boundaries such as back and side fences. For operational reasons this makes them unsuitable as census boundaries, as CCDs need to be defined by more emphatic features, such as roads.

Questions or comments on CCD design are welcome. Call Adam Czapracki on (03) 6222 5839 or email adam.czapracki@abs.gov.au

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CENSUS INFORMATION IN YOUR LIBRARY

As the ABS gears up for Census 2001, individuals and organisations, government departments, and agencies such as Libraries have been providing comments, reactions and views about the 1996 Census. One focus of the feedback process is CLib.

CLib is a CD ROM produced especially for use in public Libraries which contains information from the Census with the software that allows access, display, printing and aggregation of data. The data are presented as community profiles consisting of a number of tables of population characteristics including age, birthplace, income, occupation, and religion, for a variety of geographical and customised areas from Collector District, electoral division, to State or sub-state region.

The basic building block is the Collector District, an area of about 220 households. These are used to build all the larger units which can be tailored to provide population data relevant to a variety of questions and uses. Thus it can be used to produce a population profile of the

neighbourhood of a corner store, an age profile of a postcode area, or the birthplace mix of a suburb. There is also a time series comparing data from the last three Censuses for local government areas and State level.

CLib is currently available through Hobart, Launceston, Devonport, Burnie, Kingston, Clarence and Glenorchy libraries. **A guide to using CLib**, with links to technical tips and hints, is also available on this web site: **[click here](#)**

Although the data cannot be downloaded to disc, the tables created can be printed and then used for further analysis. The program provides a wealth of information from the Census and is available at a click of a mouse at your library.

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AUSSTATS: THE ABS AT YOUR DESKTOP

Ausstats is our new online service accessible via the ABS web site to those organisations which have subscribed.

Ausstats allows clients full access to:

- Over 2000 spreadsheets
- All ABS publications from 1998 onwards in Adobe Acrobat format
- Multi-dimensional datasets in SuperTABLE format
- Census Basic Community Profiles to Statistical Local Area level in Excel format
- All other material on the ABS web site, including main features, release advices and Australia Now

Subscribers have the choice of their custom ID and password or corporate network access where every person within a given domain or IP address subnet can use the service.

Ausstats is available by subscription with prices starting at \$1080. A range of subscription options is available; you can use the option which best suits your data needs.

For further information contact: Wally Van Schie: Ph: 6222 5971 or email:

w.van.schie@abs.gov.au

Visit the **[Ausstats home page](#)** on our web site.

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SELECTED RECENT RELEASES

Directory of Tourism Statistics 1130.0

This reference publication on Australia's tourism industry has been extensively updated and includes comprehensive information on Australian sources of tourism statistics in the public and private sectors. For each identified collection, the directory provides information on the method of collection, data details, geographic coverage, frequency of publication and other information to help the reader identify the type of statistics available and how to access them.

Released on 17/3/2000 \$37.00 37pp

ABS Statistics and The New Tax System 1358.0

Discusses impacts on statistical series resulting from The New Tax System that starts on 1 July 2000 and provides an assessment of the likely changes to the manner in which statistics are produced as well as describing the expected short and long term changes to several key ABS statistical series.

Released on 26/04/2000 \$10.00 36pp

Participation in Education, Australia 6272.0

Contains data on the civilian population aged 15-24, whether attending an educational institution, type of institution, level of course attending and broad field of study, whether full-time or part-time and the type of school last attended/attending. Data are cross-classified by the usual demographic and labour force characteristics.

Released on 27/04/2000 \$18.50 40pp

Directory of Child and Family Statistics 4158.0

Relates directly or indirectly to families and children in Australia. Provides descriptive information on various data sources, data items available, frequency of collections, publications produced and any reliability/confidentiality provisions.

Released on 28/04/00 \$29.00 140pp

Information Technology, Australia, Preliminary 8143.0

Contains selected preliminary estimates of the production and distribution of information technology and telecommunications goods and services in Australia, together with data on employment and the structure of the Information Technology and Telecommunications Industry.

Released on 1/5/2000 \$15.00 12pp

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Price Indexes and The New Tax System 6425.0

Identifies and discusses the statistical issues arising from tax reform for the suite of ABS price indexes (both producer and consumer).

Released on 3/5/2000 \$10.00 56pp

Water Account for Australia 4610.0

Part of a series of physical environmental accounts that are being developed and is focussed on the physical characteristics of Australia's water resources. Where available, quantitative data are compiled on a national and state level. Detailed statistics on the volume of surface and ground water assets (stocks), the supply and use of water by various industries and sectors, water re-use and discharge data are presented. Monetary data linked to the use of water resources are supplied. A compilation of water supply and use sustainability indicators are also presented.

Released on 3/5/2000 \$26.50 92pp

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About this release

Statistical News Tasmania is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical releases, seminars, training and reviews.

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